THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Bills are likely to cover aspects of Intellectual Property such as trademarks, industrial designs, geographical indications and patents.

(c) The Trade Marks Bill, 1999 provide for setting up of Intellectual Property Appellate Board.

Indian Trade Development Council

†539. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH:
SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that Government have constituted Indian Trade Development Council for promoting foreign trade in the country;

(b) if so, the number of persons nominated or appointed in the Council;

(c) the names of countries where the offices of said council are situated; and

(d) the detail of annual expenditure incurred by Government on this Council?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) No Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Ban On Export of Meat, Fruits and Vegetables

†540. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE & INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Law Commission has recommended to ban the export of meat, fruits and vegetables due to shortage and excessive price hike in the country;

†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, whether the Commission has also advised to amend the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority Act; and

(c) whether Government have considered this and if so, the decision thereon?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. The Law Commission has only recommended that it would be appropriate that the Government issues a notification prohibiting the export of vegetables, meat (excluding beef) and fruits altogether with a view to ensure their availability to the poorer sections of the society at reasonable rates.

(c) The Government has examined the recommendation made by the Law Commission. Keeping in view the demand and supply position, growers' interest and India's long-term export interest in meat, fruits and vegetables, it is not the opportune time to ban the export of these items.

Shortfall in Production of Tea

541. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the production of tea in the country has recorded a shortfall during the years 1998 and 1999;

(b) if so, the factors responsible for fall in the production of tea;

(c) whether Government have taken any concrete steps to boost production of tea and to earn foreign exchange; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) The production of tea during the year 1998 achieved a record of 870.40 m.kg as against 810.61 m.kg in 1997. In the current year, production of tea during the period January to September '99 was 565.93 M.kg as against 620.75 m.kg in the corresponding period of the previous year indicating a shortfall of around 55 m.kg. The shortfall in production during the current year has been mainly due to unprecedented drought that prevailed in the tea growing regions of north and south India.